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Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Broadband Industry Practices (WC Docket No. 07-52)

October 13, 2009

Dear Commissioners:

As the Federal Communications Committee prepares to hold an open hearing on the issue of Network Neutrality, I would like to take this opportunity to call attention to an important – but often overlooked – segment of the population that will be adversely affected by Network Neutrality regulations: America's elderly citizens.

Regulating the Internet in the form of Network Neutrality stands to benefit two groups: large Internet companies who are unwilling to share in the cost of bandwidth, and a small percentage of the population who use the Internet for bandwidth-hogging downloads. Network Neutrality rules do nothing to enhance the lives and well-being of our nation's elderly. In fact, there are a number of ways in which Network Neutrality will likely degrade their quality of life.

First and foremost, Network Neutrality is at odds with the universal implementation of high-tech healthcare technology. Wireless telemedicine is one vital way in which we service our elderly clients who are homebound – especially those living in rural America. The fewer obstacles standing in the way of broadband innovation and investment, the easier it will be to implement healthcare IT.

Additionally, Network Neutrality will further widen the digital divide. Elderly people are less likely to have access to broadband Internet than average Americans, either because of its cost or its perceived complicated nature. By raising broadband prices and degrading the quality of service, Network Neutrality will only make it harder for the elderly – and other disadvantaged groups – to get online.

Finally, Network Neutrality does not allow for the prioritization of bandwidth for vital government services such as first responders and fire protection. While this is an issue of public safety for all Americans, our elderly are especially vulnerable in these life-or-death situations.

*A bequest is a powerful gift of hope for a senior*

On behalf of ElderHelp of San Diego and elderly Americans everywhere, I respectfully ask that you reconsider your stance on Network Neutrality and consider working with the industry to craft policies that will preserve the fundamentals of the free Internet while promoting the well-being of all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leane Marchese", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Leane Marchese  
Executive Director  
ElderHelp of San Diego